

**THE RHODE ISLAND CONVENTION CENTER AUTHORITY  
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS  
MARKETING COMMITTEE MEETING**

**February 23, 2010**

**A meeting of the Marketing Committee of the Rhode Island Convention Center Authority Board of Commissioners was held on February 23, 2010 pursuant to notice at the Rhode Island Convention Center Boardroom, One Sabin Street, Providence, Rhode Island.**

**Board members present were Committee Chairman, Dale Venturini, Paul MacDonald, Letitia Carter, Patrick Butler and Jeffrey Hirsh.**

**Also in attendance were Jim McCarvill, Betty Sullivan and Kim Keough, RICCA; Tim Muldoon, John McGinn, Amanda Marzullo and Arlene Oliva, RICC; Martha Sheridan, Neil Schriever and Kristen Adamo, PWCVB; Larry Lepore, Cheryl Cohen and Jodi Duclos, DDC; Steve Habi, VMA; Mark Brodner, RIEDC; Buster Clegg and Tom McDonough, RI Reds Heritage Society; Evan Smith, Cathy Morrison and Jan Hagerstrom, Newport CVB and Eileen Smith, recording secretary.**

**Ms. Venturini called the meeting to order at 12:35 PM. Ms. Venturini asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the January. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Butler and seconded by Ms. Carter it was unanimously**

**VOTED: to approve the minutes of the January meeting.**

**Ms. Venturini stated that we had guests from the RI Reds Heritage Society that had asked to address the committee. Ms. Venturini introduced Buster Clegg and Tom McDonough. Mr. Clegg noted that the RI Reds Heritage Society has a membership of 700 people that have fond memories of the Reds and the RI Auditorium. Mr. McDonough stated that the society would like to establish an exhibit in the Dunkin' Donuts Center to commemorate the first AHL team to play for fifty years. Mr. McDonough announced that a plaque will be placed at the site of the former RI Auditorium in July. Discussions ensued regarding people's remembrances of the Auditorium and the Reds Hockey team. Mr. MacDonald stated that he worked as an usher at the Auditorium in his youth. Ms. Venturini assured Mr. Clegg and Mr. McDonough that we would look into what can legally and contractually be done at the Dunk for the RI Reds Heritage Society. SMG, the P Bruins and Sportservice should be consulted on the viability of the Reds proposal and the committee looks forward to an update soon.**

## **VMA**

**Ms. Venturini recognized Steve Habl. Mr. Habl reported that that January was a fairly good month for the VMA. He said that the Youth America Grand Prix went very well. Mr. Habl stated that we were privileged to have some very impressive dance talent on stage at the**

theater. Mr. Habl noted that there were 175 contestants competing in the event. Mr. Habl also noted that master dance classes were held during the competition. Mr. Habl stated that a letter has been crafted to send to local corporations inviting them to consider holding corporate meetings at the VMA. He said that a similar outreach to the pageant industry resulted in a response from the Miss Rhode Island Pageant. Mr. Habl reported that the theater has a runway and provide a service for pageants and fashion shows. Mr. Habl reported that he is posting VMA events on every free web site and calendar that he can find. He noted that we now have 1,500 followers on face book. Mr. Habl was pleased to report that following his visit to the train station, Amtrak will be doing a piece for their publication featuring the VMA. Mr. Habl noted that the VMA has been chosen as an official site for Oscar Night in America party. He said that ABC 6 is filming as we speak and will broadcast from the event. Mr. Habl reported that he had recently been stuck in the freight elevator for a few hours. Ms. Venturini stated that everyone appreciates that job being done under less than perfect conditions.

Ms. Carter departed at 1:10 PM

PWCVB

Mr. Schriever began the Power Point Presentation of CVB activity. Mr. Schriever reported that total definite year to date 2010 bookings and room nights are ahead of 2009 and although the number of

Convention Center bookings are slightly lower the associated room nights generated are higher than 2009. Mr. Schriever noted that the CVB had recently honored 23 ambassadors. Mr. Schriever reported that UUA had signed a letter of commitment for June 2014. He said that this conference is huge and will take up space in both the Convention Center and the Dunk. Mr. Schriever reported other tentative events include Citizens Bank, Amway, American Industrial Hygiene Association, New England Turfgrass, the National Association of Oil Heating Service Managers and the Hospitality Performance Network. Mr. Schriever reported that the sales team had attended the PCMA Annual Meeting in Dallas as well as several meetings in Boston. The team had also made sales calls at Brown University, New York City, Indianapolis and Dayton. Ms. Adamo reported that the CVB had hosted media from Redbook, New Haven Register and Peter Greenberg. Ms. Adamo noted that we received extraordinary national press on the Flower Show. She said that USA Today, Newsday and AAA Horizons as well as the local media had pieces about the Flower Show. Ms. Adamo stated that the CVB is in the process of finalizing the next issue of Destination Providence. Ms. Adamo reported that a last minute getaway program was developed with Phoenix Media that includes VMA events.

Discussion turned to the NCAA Basketball Tournament. Ms. Keough, Ms. Adamo and Mr. Schriever reported that they are working with WPRI and Fox Providence on media sponsorships and extended coverage of the tournament. Ms. Adamo stated that the CVB is

coordinating a welcome for each team and working with the Providence Journal on an insert for the March 18th issue. Mr. Schriever announced that a Selection Sunday party will take place at McFaddens. He said that immediately following the selections the CVB staff will be available to work with the visiting teams on arrangements for their stay in Rhode Island. Discussions ensued regarding the teams that are likely to play in the Dunkin' Donuts Center.

## **DUNKIN DONUTS CENTER**

Ms. Cohen updated the Committee on the Dunkin' Donuts Center's sales and marketing objectives. She noted that the budgeted sale of sponsorships and signage for Fiscal Year 2010 are \$870,923 and to date we are optimistic that we will reach our goal. In January contracts have been signed with Snipits, a hair salon for children, and AXE, a body spray product for men. Ms. Cohen reported that negotiations are ongoing with Peter Pan Buslines, ESA Skates, Pizzeria Uno and the RI National Guard. Mr. Butler asked if all advertising had to be covered during the basketball tournament. Ms. Cohen answered that it does have to be covered in the bowl but not on the concourse. Ms. Cohen stated that we continue to have success with the sale of the party suites. She said that suites are currently available for Chris Daughtry, Harlem Globetrotters, Stars on

Ice, Tony Carreira, Ringling Bros. Circus and Walking with Dinosaurs. Ms. Cohen reported on the Dunkin' Donuts Center's group sales objective. Ms. Cohen reported that the number of group tickets sold between 7/09 and 1/10 is lower than the same period last year although the number of events and revenue increased. Mr. MacDonald noting that only 6,000 tickets were sold said that it did not seem like many tickets were available for group sales. Ms. Cohen stated that the promoters only allow a small number of discount tickets. Ms. Cohen presented a snapshot of Dunkin' Donuts Center bookings by season showing the number of events and the breakdown between PC, P Bruins, SMG-AEG Live Nation, FELD and various other sources. Mr. MacDonald stated that there has been a big improvement from the 2007-2008 season and he would like to think that the Authority played a significant role. Mr. Lepore reminded the Committee that the 2007-2008 season was at the end of the renovations. Mr. Butler noted that we have not yet reached the end of the fiscal year and he asked if the numbers could go higher. Ms. Cohen said that there may be other events booked this year and that the printout does not include any playoff games for the P. Bruins.

## **CONVENTION CENTER**

John McGinn presented the Convention Center update. He noted that he is confident that the Convention Center will reach their revenue goal of \$8 million. He said that currently \$7,967,711 is on the books

and \$32,288 is needed to reach that goal. Mr. McGinn reported that the sales team has submitted proposals and are negotiating contracts for 2011, 2012 and 2013 with New England Winter Sports Reps. Mr. McGinn reported that Tedeschi Food Shops had confirmed dates for 2011. Labs 21, a new environmental/scientific convention has been sent a contract for September 2011 and Emery Waterhouse is looking at dates in 2011 and 2012. Mr. McGinn reported that the sales staff had attended a CVB Boston Client Luncheon that resulted in obtaining RFP from NE Educational Opportunity Association. Mr. McGinn noted that we have several prospective meetings that the sales team is working to secure. Other tentative events include RICJ Awards Banquet, Volunteers in Providence Schools, Education in Action May Breakfast and the Institute of Labor Studies. Mr. McGinn was happy to report that the CVS Charity Classic Gala would be held in the Convention Center in June. Mr. McGinn reported that Citizens Bank has become an important client for the Convention Center. He said that they have recently held several corporate events and they are negotiating for another in April. Mr. McGinn noted that the Chamber of Commerce toured the facility for the Business Expo and site tours for the IBEW Reception, the GI Joe Convention, Master Brewers, The Council of State Governments took place during the month. Mr. McGinn also noted that Colin Walsh visited the building and there is a possibility that some movie filming will happen here.

**WEB DESIGN/AUTHORITY PR**

**Ms. Keough reported that a few minor changes have been made to the web site. She announced that a photographer has been hired to take pictures of events and assemble a photo gallery that can be used on the web site and in advertising the facilities. Mr. McCarvill noted that it seems that we were always getting photos taken but we never had the one that we were looking for. He said that we should have a good selection of pictures to work with. Ms. Adamo noted that it is very difficult to photograph inside a trade show.**

**Ms. Keough distributed a draft of an invitation to a reception to welcome our visitors and thank all the individuals that have worked so diligently to make the NCAA Basketball Tournament a memorable experience. Ms. Venturini asked who the reception is for. Ms. Keough said that the Board members will receive invitations as well as the planning committee, participating teams, Athletic Directors, League officials and coaches. Ms. Keough noted that a welcome video is being prepared with messages from the Governor and the Mayor.**

## **NEWPORT CVB**

**Mr. Smith introduced his companions. Discussions ensued regarding Newport's chances of hosting the America's Cup races. Mr. Smith reported that Halsey Herreshoff is representing Rhode Island at meetings and California and that Newport is being proactive in the process. Mr. Smith noted that he should have a decision on the**



**Volvo races this week and that Miami is our competition. Ms. Venturini said that it is very exciting that we are in the running for both competitions. Mr. Butler said that he understands that the America's Cup destination is decided by one individual. Mr. Smith stated that the defending Yacht Club makes all the decisions, in this case the San Francisco Yacht Club. Mr. Smith said that he thinks Newport is a long shot to be chosen for the event.**

**Ms. Venturini asked if there was any other business. Hearing none she asked for a motion to adjourn. Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Butler and seconded by Mr. MacDonald it was unanimously**

**VOTED: to adjourn at 2:05 pm**